2015 College Handbook

A guide for students and parents of
Australian Christian College - Darling Downs
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COLLEGE PURPOSE

The vision of Australian Christian College is to develop students who are equipped spiritually, academically, physically and socially to be a positive influence on the world.

The school aims to have an eternal impact on students by sharing the Gospel of Jesus Christ and the truths found in the Bible. Through sharing this knowledge, it is hoped that every student will leave with a solid biblical foundation.

Growing in Christ

The school motto is shorthand for the vision. It reflects the schools’ desire to see students live out their Christian faith and mature in likeness to Christ. “Growing in Christ” is progressive. The first word of the motto is a verb ending with “ing” which means it is occurring in the present and continuing in the future. It reflects our belief in Jesus Christ as Lord of all, as evidenced by his words and works.

That belief is not just a statement. Jesus called his followers to live what they believed – to turn from their own ways and make new decisions according to God’s way. Growing in Christ is transformational. As the apostle Paul testified, “I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.” (Galatians 2:20)

The information contained within this handbook is intended to be useful in framing and detailing aspects of the College’s operation.

College Distinctive

The ‘heart’ of all ACC schools is the same:

• Christian teachers
• The Learning Program is taught from a Biblical worldview
• Technology focus, including online learning
• Blend of academic excellence and Christian faith

Every ACC school shares a student Learner Profile which explains what attributes we are trying to model and teach to our students. Every ACC school shares the same Statement of Faith. While there is a standard model for operating an ACC school, there are variations to accommodate the local context of each school. Similarly, the learning programs vary based on the requirements of the relevant state government education authority.

College Statement of Faith

• That the 66 books of the Bible are the Word of God, divinely inspired in all parts without error in its origin and the sole authority for doctrine and practice;
• In the one Triune God, eternally existent as Father, Son and Holy Spirit, who created the physical universe by His direct and immediate spoken word, and man in His own image, during the six days of creation;
• That Satan is a real personality and an evil presence in the world;
• In the pre-existence, incarnation, virgin birth, sinless nature and life, miracles, substitutionary death, bodily resurrection, ascension to heaven, and personal bodily return of the Lord Jesus Christ;
• In the total depravity of the nature of man and the entrance of death into the world through his fall in the Garden of Eden, and the absolute inability of man to save himself from eternal punishment by his own works;
• In the regeneration of man by the grace of God and the work of the Holy Spirit, which is available to whoever comes to Christ through faith in His finished work on the cross;
• In the spiritual relationship of all believers with the Lord Jesus Christ and witnessing to His saving grace and living a life of good works and service, through the ministry of the Holy Spirit

**ACC Learner Profile**

The vision of the College is to develop students to be equipped spiritually, academically, physically and socially so that they are a positive influence on the world and they proclaim the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. For this reason, our learner profile is a key document in the operation of our Colleges. At Australian Christian College it is our aim to nurture students to display these attributes:

**Christ-centred:** They grow in the knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ and the truth of the Bible. They understand the historical reality and evidence supporting Scripture. They are courageous and articulate in communicating the Gospel. They have a personal relationship with Christ and strive to be more like Him.

**Inquirers:** They ask questions and are eager for knowledge. Their natural curiosity is encouraged and nurtured. They seek answers, research thoroughly, create alternatives, challenge assumptions, think deeply and test theories. They reflect on their learning experiences, processing the information in meaningful ways and take positive action as a result.

**Confident:**
Each student is uniquely crafted in the image of God, who created them for good works. As such, they have a well-grounded sense of who they are and how they fit into the world. This instills confidence and boldness.

**Creative:**
They exercise creativity in a broad range of contexts from problem solving to critical thinking. This creative ability will enable them to adapt to changes in society and to also differentiate themselves from their peers.

**Communicators:**
They become good oral and written communicators. They are attentive listeners and articulate their ideas and thoughts honestly, confidently and logically.

**Optimistic:**
They display an optimistic outlook and pleasant disposition. This optimism is based on the hope of salvation due to the finished work of Jesus Christ on the Cross. Students see new possibilities in both success and failure.

**Compassionate:**
They show empathy and care toward others.

**Self-controlled:**
They act in a self-disciplined manner, recognising their gifts, abilities and shortcomings. They think before acting and understand that self-discipline models a Christ-centred life.

**Risk-takers:**
They have the capacity and desire to try new things, learning from their successes and failures. They enjoy the rich learning that comes from taking risks.

**Honest:**
They believe that relationships and society thrive when individuals choose to live and speak the truth as modeled by Christ.
COMMUNICATION

College Contact Details
Australian Christian College – Darling Downs  Telephone: (08) 9399 6776
10 Ninth Road, Brookdale WA 6112    Email: darlingdowns@acc.edu.au
Web: darlingdowns.acc.edu.au

Staff Email:
• Mr John Matthews  johnmatthews@acc.edu.au
• Mrs Terry Phipson  terryphipson@acc.edu.au
• Mrs Akilia Senanayake  akilasenanayake@acc.edu.au
• Miss Sandra Oelofse   sandraoelofse@acc.edu.au
• Mrs Cheryl Grosser  darlingdowns@acc.edu.au

Note: Please contact the College Office if you have any queries or concerns (your query will be directed to the relevant staff member).

Parent Contact Details
If you change your address, email and/or phone number or family circumstances, please inform the College in writing (email is suitable) immediately. Prompt receipt of accurate information ensures your family receives all vital information from the College on time.

Means of Communication
For general matters, staff communicate via:
• College Handbook - Provided to parents each academic year.
• College Newsletter - Provided to parents Friday each fortnight.
• College Calendar - Provided to parents at the commencement of each new term.

For student specific matters, the staff communicate via:
• Student Diary, Phone or Email - Teaching staff through Diary, email or phone will be proactive in their communication with parents/guardians in support of student learning and wellbeing.
• Student Review Meetings (SRMs) - Two formal parent/teacher interviews are held each year. The first in Term 1 (Week 5) and the second in Term 3 (Week 2). The meetings have an academic focus.
• Semester Reports - Semester Reports are issued at the conclusion of Terms 2 and 4.

Parent Initiated Communication - Parents who wish to discuss their child’s academic, pastoral or co-curricular progress should email their child’s homeroom teacher in the first instance. If you would like to discuss something in person please phone or email the College office to arrange a meeting or a return phone call. Parents are welcome to discuss students’ progress with any of their teachers. On occasions it may be appropriate to directly contact the relevant sub school coordinator and/or the Principal.

Note: The College continues to develop its Online Platform (ACC Online) for the purpose of providing parents and students with access to the learning program ‘off campus’.
DAILY LIFE

Daily Routine

The formal timetable runs from 8.45am to 3.00pm each day, with Kindergarten running Monday, Wednesday and Friday only. Each term a Co-curricular program is issued to students with activities that may occur before or after the scheduled school day, including weekend events.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Activity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8.45am</td>
<td>Commence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.30 - 11.00am</td>
<td>Recess</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.30 - 1.00pm</td>
<td>Lunch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.00pm</td>
<td>Dismissal</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Students participate in an assembly each Friday morning commencing at 8.55am. Each class has opportunity to run the assembly at least once per term. Parents are informed by their teacher when their child’s class is running the assembly. The formal School timetable is set aside at different points in the year for the purpose of assessment, camp and excursions/incursion.

Student Attendance

For the safety of our students it is important that the following procedures are followed:

**Absences due to illness:** Communication from parents informing the College of their child’s absence due to illness may take the form of either a phone call or email to the School office prior to 9.00am. This information is then made available to all of your child’s teachers. If the College office has not received notification of absence Administration staff will contact parents/guardians to confirm that the student is not at school.

**Late arrival/Early departure to attend an appointment:** Students arriving late to school or needing to depart early for an appointment must be signed in or signed out at the College office by a parent/guardian. A receipt slip is then handed to the teacher by the student.

**Request for Leave of Absence:** Communication from parents requesting a ‘Leave of Absence’ for their child during term time must be made in writing (email is suitable) addressed to the Principal. There is no expectation on staff to develop or provide individual materials in a situation where a family has made a decision to remove their child during school term. In removing your child from school for this period you will be assuming all responsibility for his or her education during this time.

**Exclusion from Sport due to medical reasons:** Parents requesting that a student be excluded from Sport or Physical Education for medical reasons should write a note to the teacher.

**Special College Functions:** The College from time to time will have ‘Special Functions’ which will require all students to be in attendance. These may occur outside normal College days/hours.

Access to the Campus

Access to the campus is via the main carpark. At all times care is required due to the presence of young children. It is important that the following guidelines are followed:

- **General:**
  - Road rules, signs and markings are to be followed at all times.
  - Strict observance of a 10km/hour speed limit on school property is required.
  - Cars must give way to buses.
  - Pedestrians are to avoid traffic areas.
  - Vehicles are to reverse park into provided parking spaces.
• Bicycles: Students are to avoid riding their bicycles on campus and in the car park area. Bicycles are to be left outside the Year 4-6 classroom and it is recommended that they be locked. The wearing of safety helmets while travelling to and from school is compulsory.

**Campus Visitors**

All visitors to the College must register their presence on campus at Reception and be given a visitors badge to wear for the duration of their visit. Parents on campus between 8.45am and 3.00pm are required to register their presence on campus and have on a visitor’s badge.

**Student Supervision**

Students may arrive at school from 8.30am onwards, when members of staff assume their duties for the day. At 8.30am when staff commence classroom supervision, students may move to these areas. The playing field is not used before school. All students should be at school no later than 8.40am. From 8.40am students are expected to move to classrooms and prepare for the commencement of the school day. Responsibility cannot be accepted for the supervision of students who arrive at school before 8.30am.

**Student Uniform**

The College views the College uniform as a key element in fostering a sense of unity and equality amongst the student body. There is a Summer and Winter uniform which students wear terms 1 & 4 and 2 & 3 respectively.

**Uniform Fitting and Purchase:** The College operates an Online Uniform Shop by which items of uniform may be purchased via the College’s online portal. Uniform size fittings can be arranged through the College Office prior to purchasing online. The College Office has a limited range of second hand items available for purchase, as well as being a venue for resale of students’ uniforms. Current items of uniform that are in good condition, washed, ironed, dry-cleaned (blazers) may be purchased through the College Office.

**Uniform Days:**

- **Years K & PP:** Students are required to wear their College Sports Uniform for each day they are on campus. K & PP students do not wear the College Formal Uniform.
- **Years 1-6:** Students are required to wear their Formal College Uniform usually on Monday, Wednesday and Friday. On Tuesday and Thursdays students wear their full College Sports Uniform to and from school for their Physical Education classes. Please note that the sports day may vary due to timetable needs.

**Uniform Standards:**

- For Requirements and Standards see the separate ‘Uniform’ document
- School uniform is to be worn correctly by all students while on and off the College Campus, and when travelling to and from School.
- When ties are worn the collar button must be done up, shirts need to be tucked in.
- A blazer must be worn when travelling to or from School during terms 2 and 3.

Please note: Occasionally the School will have Casual Dress Day where students will be permitted to wear casual clothing. This is usually run as a fund-raising exercise. On these days, clothing must be clean and neat, with the rules on jewellery remaining unchanged.

**Canteen**

The P&C run a canteen for staff and students on Thursday of each week. Students take an order form home on Tuesday afternoon, which students then return on Thursday morning with their payment.

**Lost Property**

Lost property is managed by teaching staff through their classrooms.
ACADEMIC

Curriculum

The College Curriculum follows the developing Western Australian Curriculum & Assessment Outline and Curriculum Framework. Students study subjects from the eight key learning areas, plus Bible.

- English
- The Arts
- Humanities
- Health & Physical Education
- Mathematics
- Design & Technology
- Science
- Mandarin

General Learning Program:

The College has a learning program that seeks to develop students with a great interest in and capacity to learn. The early years program focuses on providing students with a rich language, tactile and social experience to support the child’s intellectual development. In conjunction with this there is explicit teaching and monitoring of the fundamentals skills of literacy and numeracy. As the child matures we seek to develop in the student their capacity as a learner – their ability to self-monitor, to take responsibility and ownership of their learning. Quality relationships, encouragement to take risk, and the space to reflect, think and contribute are at the centre of the College’s learning programs. These are reflected in our ‘Learner Profile’.

Areas of Focus:

Outdoor Education – Camping Program

Outdoor Education is an important component of the College’s learning program with students in Years 4 to 6 participating in a compulsory Camping Program. The program offers students opportunities to develop and test initiative, leadership and self-reliance. Through this the student goes in awareness of themselves and others.

Music & Arts

The Music & Arts Program is an inclusive one; built on active student participation. It is important that students have the opportunity to explore and express themselves through different mediums. The learning of a musical instrument and the associated requirement for discipline practice is highly valued by the College.

International Program

Being internationally minded and aware is vital for our students and their future. The importance of this is at the heart of our long-term languages program. With China, along with Singapore, growing in regional significance the College is committed to establishing a Mandarin language program.

Communicating Student Progress

The College seeks to keep its parents informed of their child’s progress throughout the year. On a day-to-day basis the School Diary, email and telephone are used by teaching staff. At a more formal level Parent Information Evenings, Student Review Meetings (SRMs), and Semester Reports provide important information concerning student learning. During each semester teaching staff place key student assessment tasks and work samples in a Student Work Portfolio. This may be accessed by the parent and is used by the teaching staff in discussing student learning.
Diary Use

The Student Diary is a vital tool to record information such as homework, assignments, sport or other event requirements. The diary is also used as a communication tool between parent and teacher. Students are required to have their College Diary each day. All homework is recorded for each day, and once per week it is asked that the diary is signed by the parent and the teacher.

Homework

The purpose of homework is provide an opportunity:

• For parents to interact and talk with their child about their schoolwork in a positive manner.
• To develop a disciplined and responsible attitude towards learning.
• To develop time and resource management skills.
• To practice and reinforce work learned in class and to revise content covered in class.
• To prepare for an upcoming set class lesson.

The development of the independent discipline of the student learner is important, with the allocation of homework tasks as a means of achieving this. Needless to say, leisure time is important and homework should never be seen as a form of punishment. The Student Diary is a means of managing task and time allocation.

Encouraging Excellence

The ACC Learner Profile provides the focus for what the College seeks to develop and celebrate in the lives of students. An Award Card system is in place to encourage students to do their best and to acknowledge both their endeavour and achievements.

Academic Support & Extension

All children have the right to access challenging, comprehensive and purposeful educational experiences that are appropriate to their level of development, experience and understanding. It is recognised that all students develop at varying rates, possess an individual profile of relative strengths and weaknesses and have different learning styles and capacities. The College seeks to provide opportunities to maximise student potential and experience ongoing success.

What you can expect:

• Pre-intervention or baseline diagnostic assessment.
• An individual educational plan for a student working on a program that differs from the normal classroom program
• Support of the classroom teacher in modifying the curriculum to address student needs.
• Post-intervention assessment to determine progress.
• A written school report at the end of each semester.
• Liaison with between the teacher, specialists and parents throughout this process.

How students are identified for support:

• School issued standardised tests (ACER), National assessments (NAPLAN), and teacher-devised tests.
• Referral from classroom teachers and/ or concerns raised by Parents.

Student Stationery & Learning Resource List

Many of the learning resources are provided directly by the College for students to access. A ‘Student Stationery & Resource List’ can be accessed through the College Office.
PASTORAL CARE

General
Primary and central care of the student lies with their classroom teacher whose role it is to know well the individual student and their parents. Quality pastoral care is enhanced by the provision of a rigorous educational program with breadth and depth to stimulate and challenge the student. This along with the openness of communication between teacher, parent and child is the basis of the College’s pastoral care provision.

Awards
Recognition of a student’s personal growth and achievement is important for both the student and the whole school community. The ACC Learner Profile provides the purpose and focus for this recognition. Students are able to work towards particular awards.

Behaviour Management
The College has a common behaviour management process across all classes. A ‘College Code of Conduct,’ shaped by three ‘guiding principles’ and three ‘student behaviour expectations’ is expanded and articulated in every classroom by each class and written up as an ‘Essential Agreement’.

College Code of Conduct – These principles and expectations aim to create in each student a way of doing things that acknowledges their rights and responsibilities.

Guiding Principles:
- All members of the school community are to be courteous and respect the rights of others.
- No member of the school community is to behave in a way that is potentially dangerous to themselves or others, or damaging to school property.
- All members of the school community must cooperate to ensure that the School is a happy and safe place to work and play, based on the principles of common sense, courtesy and mutual respect.

Student Behaviour Expectations:
- Behave in a way that does not place themselves or others in danger.
- Care for and respect peers through the use of appropriate language, physical contact and respect for opinions and property.
- Conduct yourself in a way that shows respect for the College's traditions, values, rules and standards.

Essential Agreements - are class-by-class generated agreements as to the specific detail or rules that govern safe and respectful activity in the School. An Essential Agreement is published in each classroom. Teachers use a common framework to guide their class in developing their agreement in the first week of school. Essential Agreements cover aspects such as:
- student movement in emergency situations,
- management of school bags, laptops and musical instruments,
- movement around the campus and activity in play areas,
- litter management,
• uniform standards and expectations,
• classroom work standards and courtesies.
• Acceptable Use Digital Device Agreement

Note: Please refer to College Policies on the College Website.

**Bullying**
The College seeks to affirm each student's worth and dignity. Bullying strikes at the foundation of these values and prevents students from developing their full potential. Students are entitled to receive their education free from humiliation, oppression and abuse. Bullying affects everyone, not just the bullies and their victims. It also affects those who may witness violence, intimidation and the distress of the victim. It can damage the atmosphere of a class and even the culture of a school.

Bullying is any behaviour intended to hurt, injure, threaten or frighten another person. Bullying represents an imbalance of power or the attempt to gain control over another person. It is persistent and repetitive. It can take a number of forms – physical, verbal, written or social/psychological.

Bullying in any of its forms is not acceptable in this school. Should a student be referred to a teacher for bullying behaviour or a series of behaviours that constitute bullying, a process to support all parties is immediately implemented. The parents of students involved will be contacted and informed of the strategies that will be implemented by the school to support the students. Parents will receive communication from the school until all parties are satisfied that the matter has been resolved.

Note: Please refer to College Policies on the College Website.

**Student Leadership**
The College's senior students are provided with formal leadership duties over the year.

**Student Review Meetings (SRMs)**
Note: See academic section of this handbook.

**Prayer**
The college endeavours to integrate prayer into all aspects of college life with staff contributing to the life of the college through prayerful engagement with their work:

- Staff start the day with prayer and/or class devotion. This process supports students' personal reflection and provide opportunity for students to actively engage with prayer.
- Teachers are encouraged to pray at other times with their classes as the need arises.
- The college community prays together at assemblies and on other occasions.

**Personal Space**
The College believes it is important that there is ‘space’ in the student’s school life for them to know themselves, to know others, and to come to understand the world that they live in. In practical terms this means that students mature at different rates, develop understandings at different times, that it is important that there is pause for the student to contribute and to take risk in front of their teacher and peers. Space allows for deep honesty, for significant thought and personal integrity.
HEALTH AND WELLBEING

Allergy Awareness

An allergy is an adverse reaction to something that is either ingested, inhaled, injected or comes into contact with the skin. Symptoms of an allergic reaction may be localised or generalised. Food, medications and insect venom are the most common triggers of severe allergic reactions. Anaphylaxis is a sudden and severe allergic reaction – it is potentially life threatening and always requires an emergency response.

On campus there will be students with identified suspected and unidentified allergies that can be severe, such as life threatening allergies to peanuts and/or nuts. Some allergies are so severe that anaphylactic shock may be induced simply by eating and/or touching these foods.

The College has adopted a series of guidelines to reduce the risk of anaphylaxis and the provision of appropriate action should anaphylaxis occur:

• Parents of students are asked to refrain from sending food products containing nuts or peanuts to school. We recognise that this may at times be difficult however; in the interests of safety parents are urged to try and respect this request.
• Children will be encouraged to not share food.
• All children will be educated on the need to wash their hands before and after eating food.

It is of upmost importance that parents notify the College of any known or suspected allergies, particularly severe allergies their children may have and provide an Anaphylaxis Action Plan and any relevant medication i.e. Epipen/oral antihistamine. It is also a parental responsibility to ensure that all medications supplied are ‘in date’ and have not expired. Parents whose child has been prescribed an Epipen or Epipen Jnr are urged to register with the Reminder Club at www.epiclub.com.au. This free service ensures a reminder is sent when the Epipen is due to expire so that it can be replaced.

Cybersafety

Being well informed as a parent is key to supporting your child. The following website is designed to help children and whole families find out how to be cybersmart and use the Internet safely.

• http://www.cybersmart.gov.au

Staying on task when completing homework online is a challenge for all students. Two free programs that temporary block social media sites, games and emails are:

• http://getcoldturkey.com (for PC)
• http://selfcontrolapp.com (for Apple)

Medical Issues

• Care-Plans: Parents/Guardians are required to provide their child’s current medical history to the College by completing the Current Care-Plan. Parents must notify the College if there are any changes to their child’s medical details so that this information can then be updated.

• Medications: If a student requires medication to be dispensed by the College Office, the Parent/Guardian must place this request in writing to the Principal. The Principal will inform the parents in writing as to whether the College is able to comply with the request or not.
Mental Health
Good mental health is important as the young person grows and develops into adulthood. There are a number of resources that are now available to students and their families:

- Headspace: www.headspace.org.au
- Kids Helpline: www.kidshelpline.com.au

Psychology Services
The College has access to an educational psychologist through the Non Government Schools Psychology Service (NGSPS). All learning and pastoral concerns are to be directed to the classroom teacher in the first instance. If it is agreed that input from the psychologist would be beneficial, then the College will contact the NGSPS.

Sunsmart Guidelines
The following guidelines have been adopted to reduce risk for staff and students from skin damage caused by exposure to the sun. The guidelines apply throughout the school year and while on school camps, excursions, carnivals and co-curricular activities.

- Students are required to wear a College hat outdoors during terms 1 & 4.
- Students without hats are directed to designated shaded areas.
- Staff wear brimmed hats while outdoors, on excursions and on duty.
- Students are educated about wearing and applying their own sunscreen.
- Sunscreen is provided in large tubs during carnivals and other outdoor events.
ACTIVITIES & EVENTS

Activities & Events
Many special events are held at the College throughout the year, including information sessions, assemblies, performances and social events. Details of these are found on the School calendar and often in the School newsletter.

PARENT RESOURCES

Contact List
The opportunity is available for a class contact list to be provided to parents. This is done on a voluntary basis where permission is granted for contact details to be shared with other parents.

P & C
The College P&C provides a formal structure by which parents are able to contribute to the College community through ‘friend-raising’ and ‘fund-raising’. The P&C committee operates with the approval of the Principal.

COLLEGE POLICIES

College Policies
College Policies may be found on the College Website at: darlingdowns.acc.edu.au.